

Content Standards Informer

Curriculum and Instruction Unit

December 2010

Featured Montana School

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The Early Learning Family Center at Skyline is a partnership between Great Falls Public Schools (GFPS) and the Early Childhood Coalition, of which GFPS is a member. The coalition has long dreamed of creating a one-stop early childhood center to meet the needs of the youngest in Great Falls. Stimulus funding allowed GFPS to step up and offer a partnership using an empty public building. The Early Learning Family Center houses not only the Great Falls Preschool but also Head Start classrooms, the Parent Participation Preschool, and several community agencies.

The GFPS Preschool houses four all-day classrooms. There is one four-hour classroom and two two-and-a-half-hour classrooms. The partial day classrooms are meeting the needs of IDEA preschoolers. The full-day classrooms are funded by Title I and Early Reading First and allow for mainstreaming of IDEA students that are ready for a full-day experience. The Title I children are from the Longfellow and Whittier areas since they are GFPS's highest poverty and lowest achievement Title I schools. There is no charge for the preschool. Full-day classes go from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Eight highly qualified, certified teachers staff the preschool with the support of six paraprofessionals. One of the teachers is the Early Reading First Coach which means she supports all teachers to assure every child gains essential early literacy skills.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) invites you to nominate PK – 20 educators with expertise in Mathematics, Communication Arts, and Indian Education for a working group that will provide input and guidance on the additional Montana content for the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The deadline is January 4, 2011.

OPI Contacts: Kris Goyins, kgoyins@mt.gov, or Jean Howard, jhoward@mt.gov

Online Resources

[Smithsonian Education](#) Smithsonian educational resources and programs; publishing Smithsonian in Your Classroom, a journal for elementary and middle school educators; offering research opportunities and resources to the museum community; and conducting professional development programs for educators at all levels.



www.edutopia.org Edutopia.org has a featured item called, [Stuff My Students Say](#). You are invited by edutopia.org to submit your funniest renditions of student quotes and conversations. Teachers are also welcome to visit the site to read what other teachers are reporting!

[Applying Developmental Science to Impact Teaching and Learning \(November 4, 2010, by ASCD Whole Child Bloggers \)](#)

Whole Child Podcast

Developing successful learners who are prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and citizenship in a global environment requires us to think outside the box—the cognitive box, that is.

Although traditional education is thought to exist in the cognitive domain, science tells us that children’s academic progress cannot be separated from the emotional, social, and cognitive changes that occur simultaneously. The science of learning and child development is rarely used in classrooms, and research has demonstrated that we can maximize learning when educators apply developmental principles effectively.

Download this episode of the [Whole Child Podcast](#) to learn about key principles of developmental science that can affect the way teachers teach and the way students learn.

Family Literacy

Parents who read to their children every day and talk about what they are reading together promote a joy of reading and literacy achievement. How can teachers encourage reading at home and support the role of parents as educators? One way is through the use of *family literacy bags—a paired set of theme-based fiction and nonfiction books and related interactive activities* the kids bring home from school to share with their family. The Reading Rockets Web site offers these kits in PDF format, free of charge! Check out this awesome resource at <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/27935>.

OPI Contact: Terri Barclay, (406) 444-0753, or tbarclay2@mt.gov

New Gifted Education Standards

The National Association for Gifted Children has just unveiled the new Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Education Programming Standards. They are downloadable as a PDF at this url: <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=546>.

The 2010 programming standards were developed with input from a variety of stakeholders over the past two years and integrate principles and concepts from the initial program standards, which were developed in 1998, and the national NAGC-CEC/TAG teacher preparation standards. There is increased focus on diversity and collaboration – two powerful principles that guide high-quality programs and services. The new standards use student outcomes for goals, rather than teacher practices. Both revisions create stronger standards and keep them in line with the thinking in education standards generally. The standards are also supported by research and evidence-based practices.

One of my favorites from the Six Programming Standards (Learning and Development, Assessment, Curriculum Planning & Instruction, Learning Environments, Programming and Professional Development) is **Standard 3.1. Curriculum Planning and Instruction** which states “Students with gifts and talents demonstrate growth commensurate with aptitude during the school year.” Our work as educators should ensure that *all* children demonstrate growth. This clear statement, as well as the evidence-based practices that support it, is a decisive step toward this goal.

I encourage you to download the standards and share them with all stakeholders in your school.

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Montana Learning Center

at Canyon Ferry Lake



“STEM in the 21st Century Classroom” is the theme of this year’s technology conference April 8 - 10, 2011, held at the Montana Learning Center at Canyon Ferry Lake. The focus is Technology as a pedagogical tool applied to Science, Engineering and Mathematics content to reach students with different learning styles. Issues addressed for grades 7 - 12 teachers include:

- - Using technology to make teaching more effective
- - Extending your classroom (e.g., Moodle)
- - Teaching and sharing with others in the world (e.g., Podcast)

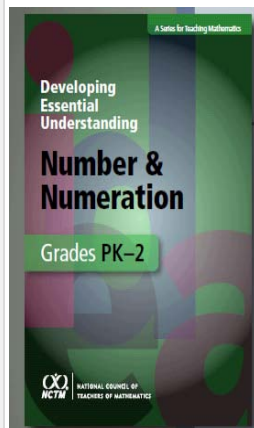
For more details, go to www.montanalearning.org and click on Programs, then Springtime in the Rockies or contact cbock@montana.learning.org.

Annual Springtime in the Rockies Technology Conference

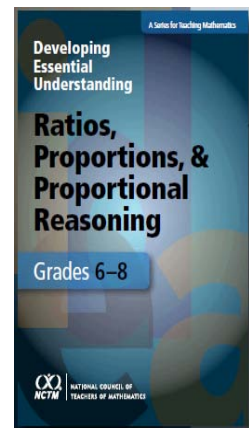
Read a Good Book: Wally's Stories

'Tis the season to read a book; Wally's Stories is an easy read and a truthful look into the thoughts and behavior of five-year olds. You don't need to teach kindergarten, have a five-year old or grandchildren; this book is worth the read for all who work with children. Thank you, Sue Harding, for suggesting this book. Wally's Stories: Conversations in Kindergarten is a book about guiding children to their own conclusions concerning the world and reality. More importantly is the message about learning from children which is a true holiday gift.

NCTM Essential Understanding Books



NCTM has a new series. "Developing Essential Understanding of Rational Numbers for Teaching Mathematics in Grades 3-5" and "Developing Essential Understanding of Functions for Teaching Mathematics in Grades 9-12" focus on essential knowledge for teachers about perennially challenging topics in the mathematics curriculum.



Watch a Good Movie

Temple Grandin is a must see movie for all educators and it is exceptionally filmed. Clair Danes plays the part of Temple who overcame autism to earn a doctorate; a most remarkable story. To see the potential in all students and understand how autistic people see the world is gift you can give yourself this season.

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Please have your colleagues sign up for CSI

The Content Standards Informer (CSI) will be distributed the first Friday of each month through the Content Standards Informer Listserv. If you would like to receive the CSI each month please sign up for the listserv at: <http://lists.opi.mt.gov/mailman/listinfo/contentstandardsinformer>